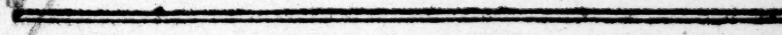


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DECEMBER—M,DCC,XCV.



By
Robert Craig esq. Advocate.

AN
INQUIRY
INTO THE
JUSTICE AND NECESSITY
OF THE
PRESENT WAR.

THE Revolution is a very remarkable æra in the history of Britain. It was absolutely necessary at the time it happened, in order to preserve these kingdoms from being subjected to absolute servitude, and to the grossest errors and superstitions of the Church of Rome. The Prince who then sat upon the throne had imbibed the most detestable dogmas and tenets of that Church, and had become a slave to its doctrines, as they were represented to, and inculcated upon him, by infamous Priests and Jesuites. He had during his brother's reign discovered some degree of judgment and understanding; but, after his elevation

to the throne, the ascendancy which Priests and Jesuites had obtained over him, seemed to have totally deprived him of every degree of judgment and penetration, in so far as to render him blind and insensible to his own interest, and in the end to precipitate him into the most irrational and imprudent conduct; the consequence of which was the loss of his crown. He entertained the same absurd and ridiculous ideas of prerogative with his father and brother; and appeared by every step of his conduct, to be determined to govern his kingdoms upon the principles of the most absolute civil and religious despotism. To preserve the liberties of the country, it became on that account necessary to invite over King William, and to place him upon the throne; and without this step the country at that time must have been enslaved and ruined.

It must have been extremely hard upon the inhabitants of the country at this time, if the other powers and nations of Europe had combined and united their force, in order to suppress and extinguish the liberties of Great Britain, and to prevent their acquisition of that inestimable freedom which they have enjoyed without interruption from that period.—Let us now transfer our views from this country to the people of France at the
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time that their Revolution happened, and consider their situation and circumstances with the same candour and impartiality.

THE French had groaned from the commencement of the reign of Louis XIV. under the most absolute civil tyranny, till the late Revolution, when they overturned at once their despotic Monarchical Government, with a view of establishing a Republic, or perhaps a limited Monarchy, if they could have brought their King to consent sincerely to have proper limitations and restrictions imposed upon his authority; but they suspected him of insincerity in all his professions, upon discoveries, I suppose, which led them to think so, and therefore cut off his head. In the same manner, the insincerity of Charles I. of Great Britain in all his professions, which the Parliament had clearly detected—the great duplicity of his character and conduct, which became evident and conspicuous in all his negotiations about peace, making it unsafe, and indeed rendering it impossible to place any confidence in him, rendered every treaty for accommodation ineffectual, and at length terminated in the same tragical manner.

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AT this time none of the nations of Europe confederated together in favour of Charles I. against the English Parliament and the Scots Covenanters, in order to compel them to submit to the absolute dominion of this Prince; none of the Powers of Europe at that time entertained the absurd idea of their having a right to dictate to this country, or to prescribe to them the mode of government they must live under, upon expelling their Royal Family from the throne. Richlieu, then Minister to Louis XIII. endeavoured by private intrigues to foment and encourage the dissensions prevailing in the country, that he might not be interrupted by the interference of the British Government, in the accomplishment of the measures which he had planned upon the continent of Europe; but he did not pretend to declare war against the English Parliament or the Covenanters, in behalf of Charles, notwithstanding the near connection, by reason of his marriage, which then subsisted between Charles and the French Court.

IN the same manner we cannot avoid observing, that at the Revolution, when James was deprived of his crown, no European nation ever dreamed of endeavouring by force of arms to restore him

to his throne. Before he left this country, he had formed the closest connections with Louis XIV. to whom, had he remained upon the throne of Britain, he would have become a most abject and convenient tool, in promoting his despotic plans and views of conquest upon the Continent: Notwithstanding that Louis must have been sensible, what an useful ally James must have been to him, by his assistance in advancing his ambitious schemes and unjust plans of conquest; yet, (tho' he afforded him an asylum in his dominions) he never attempted to declare war on his account against Britain, nor did he give him any effectual aid, in order to enable him to recover his crown. This will appear the more extraordinary, if we consider the strong reasons which Louis had to oppose the elevation of William to the British throne, who was then known to have conceived the most invincible aversion to France, in consequence of which, he was concerting plans and forming combinations and confederacies of the European Powers, in order to attack her, which his being raised to the throne of Britain, enabled him to do with much greater effect; notwithstanding all these strong reasons and motives to urge him, Louis, who was far from being scrupulous with
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regard to the justice of his wars, never thought of commencing hostilities against Britain. This can scarce be ascribed to any other cause, than the apparent and flagrant injustice of such a measure, which would probably have excited the Powers of Europe to afford their assistance to the British nation.

If it would have been repugnant to justice, to have attacked Great Britain in the situation and circumstances before mentioned, it is not easy to conceive, how the present war in which we are engaged with France can be termed just; yet this epithet has always been applied to it by those who support Ministry. If France must be admitted to be a free and independent nation, her right to reform her Constitution, and to make such alterations in it as she shall judge proper, cannot, in reason, be disputed. It can never be imagined that the French, who are so far advanced in science, and in the knowledge of every useful art, would be guilty of such madness and folly, as to provoke a war with her neighbours, at a time when she was overturning her civil constitution, and establishing a new one. At this time every wise people would wish to continue in peace, that they may have time to regulate and adjust their new constitution,

tution. This requires mature deliberation, and time and leisure is undoubtedly necessary, that every thing relating to it may be settled and arranged in a proper manner. Accordingly, they did make the most earnest applications to Great Britain, in order to preserve peace, and solicited their mediation with other powers, to promote and facilitate pacific measures. It is scarce possible to think, that they could be insincere in these applications, as peace at this time was so truly conducive to their interest. But these applications so far from being listened to, were totally disregarded by our Ministers; and this country has been engaged in a ruinous war, contrary to its true and most essential interests. If it would have been unjust to have invaded Great Britain, at the time when she was struggling to preserve her liberties, and to secure them from danger, in virtue of what right or title can we pretend to prevent the French from establishing in their country an equal and limited Government, ruled and regulated by just laws, in place of their former despotic Monarchy? It will not, perhaps, at once attain to this degree of perfection, but, like other things, by slow and gradual progressions, may arrive at as great a degree of perfection, as any human constitution is perhaps capable of attaining: To seem to envy the French

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the happiness of that liberty, in consequence of which we have enjoyed so many blessings, and among the rest an extensive and flourishing commerce, is what must reflect disgrace upon the history of this period, and fix an indelible blot and blemish upon the character of those Ministers who could employ their influence in making exertions to support and carry into execution so unworthy a plan.

THOUGH, from what has been already observed, it must appear to be a clear and indisputable point, that the present war cannot be esteemed just, yet, men have been much divided in their sentiments, at least have pretended to be so, with regard both to the justice and necessity of it. Many men, however, of real ability and deep penetration, have, after mature thought and deliberation, concluded it to be neither just nor necessary. It is, indeed, impossible to imagine, what men of profound capacity, and great ingenuity will be able to advance in behalf of any measure they have taken a resolution to maintain, even though it should be discovered to have no solid foundation in reason and good sense. Many an ill grounded measure has often been made to appear to men, by no means despicable in respect of talents, to be an
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object of choice, by the able and ingenious arguments which have been employed to support them. In the present case, it is certainly incumbent upon our Ministers, to point out to the nation the grounds upon which they pretend to found the justice of the war, as it is not easy to find out what title we can possibly have to tell the French, that they must continue to be subject to the arbitrary power of Monarchs; to presume to dictate to the first nation in Europe, who are much farther advanced in all the arts of utility and refinement, and have made more considerable progress in civility and science, than any of the neighbouring states. As the French have been flourishing for so long a time, in all the refinements of polished society, beyond any other country in the world, they certainly ought to be allowed to change or reform their government according to their own ideas, without any attempt being made, in order to hinder and defeat their intention, by other countries, who must be acknowledged to be so much their inferiors in knowledge and in arts of every kind. It may, therefore, be reasonably presumed, that, if any reasons could have been discovered in favour of the present war, the able men who have embarked the country in it, would, in their own justification, have insisted upon them.

The judgment that mankind in future ages must form of their probity and integrity undoubtedly depends upon it. That the war is both just and necessary has been boldly maintained by Ministers in their speeches, and likewise affirmed by Magistrates in their public advertisements; but they have wisely avoided to support their affirmations by any sort of reasoning, which must afford an irrefragable proof to every reflecting man, that the measure cannot be supported.

BOLD and confident assertions, with many people, supplies the place of reasoning and argument; but men of real and extensive knowledge are not to be satisfied in this manner: They can only yield their assent to solid reason and argument, which never can be advanced in justification of the present war.

THE decision, therefore, of this question concerning the justice of the war, seems to depend on a very plain, simple, and obvious proposition, which, if our Ministers can establish, will certainly intitle them to intermeddle in the affairs of France, and to assist in directing the settlement of their Government. If they can convince men of ability, that the French have no right to over-
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turn their Government, and to establish a different form, which they judge to be better adapted for promoting the true ends of government, without consulting other countries, and receiving their consent and approbation, in this case the war may be termed just. But this will be found to be a difficult undertaking. Great Britain, and other states, if it was their own case, would certainly dissent from this proposition, and ask any other state, who should think proper to intermeddle in their affairs, what right they could pretend to have in making opposition to their framing and modelling their constitution, agreeably to their own inclinations, and in such manner as they thought would most advance the happiness and interest of their own country. If we consult the principles of natural law and of equity, France must certainly have an equal right with any other European state, to change and to frame her constitution to her own mind. She is as free and independent in this respect as Great Britain, or any other kingdom on the globe ; and there does not appear to be any reason, why she should be excluded from exercising this right, or why we should pretend to have any just title to dictate to her, or to direct her with regard to the form of government she is to live under. When Louis

XIV. on the death of James VII. thought proper to proclaim his son King of Great Britain, the country received this information with a proper spirit of resentment; they considered it as the highest strain of insolence, and the greatest insult that could be offered to a free and independent nation, to presume to declare any person to be their King, or as having a title to be so.—The Parliament, at the same time, presented an address to the King then upon the throne, which was couched in the strongest expressions of attachment, and shewed a proper feeling and resentment of such gross and affrontive usage.—This spirited behaviour in the Parliament and in the nation was certainly worthy of approbation and applause. Let us judge with equal candour, when we consider the situation of the French, and acknowledge with impartiality, that we can have no right to endeavour by force of arms to compel them to submit again to Monarchical Government. Whatever our Ministers may now pretend, it was evidently at first their determined resolution to compel France to submit to her former government. This appeared clearly to have been their intention from the printed papers which they at first emitted, in which they declare, that the King, in the first place, must be restored
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to his throne, without making any mention of limitations to be imposed on the exercise of his power. After he was restored, it cannot be imagined that he would have consented to any restrictions, nor would the Powers who are confederated with Great Britain in the war, have ever agreed to any such plan—they were despotic Princes, who never would be brought to consent to such an example being exhibited to their own subjects.

CHANGES and revolutions of Government have sometimes happened in other countries: Denmark above a century ago altered her form of Government: Sweden has undergone several changes of Government, from absolute to limited, and from limited to absolute, without any other state interposing by force to obstruct the change. Indeed, no nation in Europe then thought or imagined that they had any right or title to oppose them in so doing. How the French should be debarred from exercising the same natural liberty and power, or what should give the other states of Europe a right of opposition in their case, which is not competent in respect to other states or nations, is not very obvious. Even tho' we should suppose that some inconveniencies were likely

likely to arise to other nations, from their changing their government, still this could not justify the interposition of other states, as they certainly have a right to promote their own happiness in this respect, of which it is injustice to attempt to deprive them. A gentleman of land property would be extremely surprised if any of his neighbours should oppose his making inclosures, or raising buildings upon his property, because it might hurt their views, or obstruct some beautiful prospect: He would certainly reply, that he had a right to the full and free use of his property, tho' it might a little incommode them. In the same manner, the French have a right to advance their own happiness by correcting or altering their form or constitution of government, tho' it should be attended with some inconveniencies to other states. But it will be shewn immediately, that this appears to be so far from being the case, that the reverse is the most probable. We may conclude this branch of the argument concerning the justice of the war with observing, that the sole reason and motive of it appears clearly to arise from nothing but the dread and terror which has been produced in the minds of the other Princes of Europe, that their subjects might perhaps imitate the example. But such a motive can never justify

stify our Ministers in joining in this war. It is adverse to every principle of reason to maintain, that the terror and apprehension of any Sovereigns lest they should lose their power, can justify Ministers in engaging a country, not only in an unjust war, but in a war from which the greatest detriment and hurt must flow to the most material interests of the country.

THE propensity of Ministers on many occasions to engage this country unnecessarily and without just cause in war, has appeared very strongly since the Revolution. The little benefit which Great Britain has reaped from these wars, and the evident loss and irreparable damage which the country has sustained by them, is so flagrant and incontestible, that it must astonish every person of probity and honest principles, what could induce Ministers to embark the country in connections so ruinous and destructive. In order to obtain a clear preception of the great absurdity of our extensive continental engagements, and the unlimited expence with which they are connected, it is, in the first place, necessary to discover, and shortly to explain, wherein the true and real interest of Great Britain consists. Let us attend then to its situation as an island, which is surrounded

ed on all sides by the ocean. This situation must undoubtedly point out its true interest to its inhabitants. Its climate and soil are such, notwithstanding some inconveniencies and disadvantages, as would be fully sufficient to provide its inhabitants amply with all the necessaries and conveniencies of life. A proper attention to agriculture and pasturage would furnish sufficient materials for this purpose, without engaging in, or cultivating commercial arts of any kind; and, I believe, I commit no mistake when I aver, that agriculture, both in theory and practice, has been as much improved in this island as in any country on the globe. Many excellent books and essays on the subject have been published, and the methods therein laid down for the culture of lands, have been carried into execution with great application and industry, and with suitable success; by which means we are plentifully furnished with every necessary and many of the conveniencies of life.— But no country, tho' it should produce the necessities of life in the greatest abundance, can suppress or extinguish the desires which its inhabitants must feel of enjoying the productions of other climates. This island affords many materials which, by the hand of industry, may be worked up and manufactured in many different shapes, and when they

they are thus changed, they become the objects of desire to other countries, whose soil and climate do not produce the same materials. The obvious utility and advantage arising from this to the inhabitants of different countries does not require to be demonstrated. The consideration of these advantages, which renders life so much happier and more agreeable, has been the chief inducement to engage in commerce, and to cultivate manufactures. It must appear evident, upon the least reflection, that without commerce we never could have arrived at, nor attained to our present opulent and flourishing condition. To it we are indebted for our great naval power, without which we must be exposed to frequent attacks, and must have been conquered by invasions from other countries. To our trade it is entirely owing, that we hold the ballance of Europe, and are considered by other countries as the first and principal power in Europe. From this we safely affirm, that our true interest consists in application to agriculture, without which no country can flourish; in making up and manufacturing the productions of our own island, so as to increase their value, and render them the objects of desire to other countries: to which must be added, foreign trade in all its different branches. The consequences that must

result from the industrious and assiduous cultivation of these different branches, are evidently wealth and opulence at home, and power and influence abroad; and this we find has been the consequence, and has enabled us to make greater efforts than any of the countries which surround us, and a much greater figure in all the principal transactions of Europe. Having discovered the true interest of Britain to consist in cultivating agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, the obvious conclusion must be, that every plan of conduct which is adverse to these improvements ought to be carefully avoided. These different interests, which are so essential to the prosperity of Britain, are most severely wounded and materially injured by entering into war; the hands which would be employed in husbandry, in manufactures, and in trade, are carried away to the army and navy; but the absurd practice of giving subsidies to foreign Princes, to induce them to defend the constitution and liberties of their own country, is inexpressibly ridiculous. It has been often observed, and I believe justly, that the Spaniards have long suffered the gold and silver of Mexico and Peru to be carried away from them by foreign nations, from their adhering with obstinacy to erroneous maxims. Ought not the same censure, with

with equal justice, to be applied to us, who suffer the emoluments arising from our trade to be bestowed in order to enrich foreign Princes. Before the accession of King William to the British throne, the Princes and States of Germany engaged in defence of the liberties and constitution of their own country, without being hired and paid by Great Britain for this purpose; but the case is now altered—they have from this period been accustomed to receive regular subsidies, to induce them to enter upon their own defence, and will not move a step in favour of their own country and its liberties without a pecuniary gratification.

THOUGH it cannot be denied that war strikes at the very foundation of our prosperity, yet few rules can be laid down in such general terms as to exclude all exceptions. It is not meant to be maintained, that this rule ought to obtain in every case—defensive wars, undoubtedly, fall under the exceptions, and must be allowed to be necessary; but this rule of judgment will, upon the strictest investigation, be found inapplicable to most of the wars which our Ministers have engaged us in from the Revolution.

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THESE wars have been undertaken and carried on entirely in the defence of Continental Princes, in which we have with the most irrational patience, not only submitted to squander away the riches arising from the great profits of our trade, but, with unparalleled insanity and folly, have burdened and oppressed our country with an enormous debt, which must hang heavy on the wheels of trade, to which if no stop can be put, the country must in the end be ruined by it. If these gentlemen were to be asked, what real and solid advantage could be derived to a country, the prosperity of which depends on commerce and manufactures, from the many continental wars in which it has been involved since the above-mentioned period, they would certainly be very much puzzled to give an answer ; I mean any answer that would convey solid satisfaction and conviction to a fair and impartial mind. On the other hand, it must appear obvious, that to a country whose flourishing state depends on trade, nothing can be more repugnant to, or more detrimental to its real interest and welfare, than the interruption of its commerce, the hurting of its manufactures, the squandering away the profits arising from its trade, and contracting an enormous

mous load of debt, which it never can have any prospect of being able to discharge.

THE consequences that must evidently proceed from this, are heavy taxes and oppressive impositions, which will continue to distress us while we remain a nation; to which may be added, as a natural corollary, heightening the price of labour, by which foreigners must be enabled to undersell us in foreign markets. What is this but striking at the very source of our well-being and prosperity, and sapping the very foundations of our national wealth and riches? All this has been done, and the same measures still continue to be pursued; nor can any remonstrances, or the strongest reasons that have been again and again urged, and repeated both in Parliament and in different publications, avail in putting a stop to a conduct, so evidently ruinous to a great and flourishing kingdom.

THE late Lord Chatham, who was so justly and eminently distinguished by the strength and force of his oratorical talents, declaimed, with the greatest strength of reasoning, and the utmost force of eloquence, against our engaging in German wars; and in his speeches pointed out, and demonstrated
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with the greatest perspicuity, the absurdity and futility of this conduct; but no sooner was he taken into the service of Government, than he immediately changed his tone, and employed the whole force of his eloquence and uncommon abilities, in maintaining the opposite side of the question.—The present Minister is endued with similar accomplishments. He excels in a clear, manly, and persuasive method of reasoning, joined to an elocution that is correct and elegant. In the beginning of life he acted upon principles totally different from those which he has embraced in his more mature age, and by which he professes to regulate his conduct at present; from which it is evident, that he is by no means deficient in the same versatile talents which generally distinguish every political character. Is it possible for any person, however inclinable he may be to put favourable interpretations on mens actions, to justify such a versatile behaviour? It is impossible to ascribe it to change of opinion. If a Judge on any of the benches of the Courts of Justice, was thus to abandon his principles, and sometimes to argue in one way and sometimes in another, as it tended to promote the interest of particular parties in a cause, he would incur a most detestable character, and be esteemed an unfair and unjust Judge. A
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person who would act in this manner in any dealings and transactions in private life with his neighbours, would be regarded as void of probity, and unworthy to be relied on or trusted. Is this really the case? And shall a man who has acted in this manner, where the interests of a whole community are concerned, who has changed principles, and adopted a new mode of conduct, to advance his own views of private interest at the expence of his country—shall this man escape censure, nay come off with eclat, while the other is reprobated and condemned universally? Certainly it ought not to be the case. The conduct of the Minister must be much more criminal, as it involves the welfare of the whole community, while the other is confined to the interests of private persons.

In the many German wars in which we have been engaged, many plausible arguments have been urged by Administration to justify their conduct, but they have been demonstrated to be entirely groundless, and the futility of their reasonings has been often exposed by those in opposition. Germany is a country more populous than France, and, if the Princes were to unite, would be able to bring more numerous forces into the field.

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They are able to defend themselves without receiving any aid or assistance from Britain, and they would do it if left to themselves. But since the Revolution, it has been the uniform conduct of Ministers to involve this country in every Continental war, and to take the lead in them, by giving subsidies to these Princes for bringing their forces into the field, in order to fight for themselves, and in defence of their own possessions.—What good or sound policy could require this, or how it could ever be justly esteemed to redound to the advantage of this country, is not easily understood.

It is, in truth, a very melancholy reflection, and what must sincerely afflict every virtuous mind, to observe with what facility the most corrupt Ministers have been able to procure a majority in Parliament, to approve of their measures, and to support them in the pursuit of them, though their evident tendency is to bring distress and ruin upon the country. It might be expected that the House of Commons would sometimes restrain the Minister and controul his actions, when he is pursuing schemes which do not coincide with the true interest of the country. The measures which are adopted are ascribed to the House, as they cannot
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be carried into execution without their sanction and approbation. In the superior wisdom of this House, the country justly thinks they may safely confide; yet, unfortunately for the country, it is not always the House which checks the Minister and directs his actions. The Minister somehow acquires influence sufficient to defeat the most salutary intentions of the House, and to draw them to approve of his measures. The great powers of elocution, which a First Minister is generally endowed with, can scarcely be reckoned adequate and sufficient to produce this effect, without the co-operation of other concomitant causes.

WHEN posterity shall read the history of the present times, they will certainly express the greatest astonishment at the plans and measures of conduct, and behold with indignation the blindness or treachery of Ministers, who could approve of entering into a war with France, because they had thought proper to change their government from a Monarchy into a Republic. No reason whatever can be assigned, that is sufficient to exculpate them for treating their country in this cruel manner, and for bringing such great distress and affliction on millions of people. Had the French, at the time of their Revolution, indicated any hos-

tile intention against this country, or discovered, by any step of their conduct, a resolution of attacking Great Britain, it would have been extremely just and reasonable for us to have commenced hostilities in our own defence; but nothing appeared in their proceedings, that could bear the construction of being inimical to us.— Their Revolution was brought about with the view only of reforming their own government, and rendering their condition and situation in this respect more happy and agreeable. Such an attempt made by our Ministers to re-establish despotism, and to discourage the exertions of a spirited nation to shake off their fetters and resume their liberty, can admit of no explanation that is consistent with reason and good sense. In the House of Commons, the measures of the Minister are strenuously supported by many, who are without doubt, imposed upon, and are misled in their public conduct, who really wish well, and mean to promote the real interest of their country; but this indulgent and charitable construction cannot be put with regard to the conduct of a great many in Parliament. Their real abilities and deep penetration cannot justify us in putting so mild an interpretation on their actions; their extensive reach and depth of understanding in examining matters

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to the bottom, and perceiving consequences, will not suffer us to extend our humanity so far. We must, therefore, however repugnant to our natural feelings, conclude these men to be actuated by selfish views, and the prospect of private interest. This severe conclusion, relating to the conduct of many persons in Parliament at the present time, must appear to every candid and impartial mind, whose intellectual talents enable them to judge, strictly conformable to truth, and not in the least exaggerated. I desire these men to point out any real or solid advantage that could arise to the country from entering into the present war, or to shew in what manner the country could receive any benefit from it? The distressing situation into which we have been brought by it, resulting from the interruption that has been given to our commerce, the injury that our manufactures have received, the squandering away such an infinite mass of treasure, by which means an addition of one hundred millions has been made to the national debt, is truly alarming, and cannot fail to create the most sincere concern, and the most serious and melancholy prospects of future consequences, to every well-wisher to his country. Though we should suppose, with these Gentlemen, that some advantage could result to the country from the prosecution

prosecution of the war, they certainly cannot have the effrontery to affirm, that those advantages could be compared with, or in any degree could compensate the misery and distress which is brought upon the country by it. On considering this question, no candid and impartial person can hesitate to acknowledge, that a true patriotic Minister would have laboured to continue the country in peace at this time, in place of engaging it in war. He would have applied himself in exertions to reduce the national debt, to restore and increase public credit, to extend trade and navigation, and to improve all the regulations relating to civil œconomy in the management of the public revenue. All these important services might have been performed, and are intimately connected with the preservation of peace.

It may be demonstrated, upon the clearest and most evident principles, that when France overturned her Monarchical Government, in order to establish a Republic, it was then the interest of Great Britain to avail herself of the internal confusions of France, by improving her manufactures, and extending her commerce. It was the properest opportunity she ever could have of rendering her situation in these respects better. France being

ing entirely occupied with her internal revolution, afforded an opportunity to Great Britain to improve her circumstances, and reap the advantages of her insular situation, without any hindrance or molestation from a rival power. The confusions and disorders that were naturally consequent on her change of government, presented to all her neighbours a reasonable prospect of continuing in peace. While these disorders should prevail, she would have found sufficient employment in settling her own affairs, without meddling with us or any of her neighbours for some time. Many persons of real virtue and extensive understandings congratulated their country upon the wide prospect of commercial advantages that promised to accrue to it, from the disturbances of a neighbouring state. But they have been unfortunately deceived in their expectations—other measures than they looked for have been pursued, to the great detriment of this unhappy country. Instead of embracing the favourable opportunity which these events obviously presented to us, for the extension of our trade, and the diminution of the enormous debt with which we are at present burdened, we have pursued quite contrary measures, which have been attended with misery and distress to the country. How much this must afflict e-

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very person who is really endued with the virtue of patriotism, it is unnecessary to ask. It is impossible in the present case to pretend, that the acquisitions we have made by conquest are sufficient to compensate the detriment and loss which we have sustained by the present war. These, or the greatest part of them, must be restored, in order to obtain peace upon tolerable terms to ourselves and our allies. The nation cannot yet have forgot the restitutions we were obliged to make, in order to procure peace in the late war, which commenced in 1754 in America. After having met with the most unparalleled successes in every part of the globe, did we not in the issue prove considerable losers? The consequence of our great expenditure in that war, was the addition of fifty millions to the national debt. After having been at great expence in equipping an armament with which we took the Havannah, did we not restore it at the peace, though we had been successful beyond expectation in other places? Let us then consider what we must do at present, when our successes have been greatly more than overballanced. But even supposing we were able to retain all our acquisitions, it will be found upon a fair count and reckoning, that we would be considerable losers. The expence of forts and
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garrisons in these new conquests, joined to the additional burden arising from the interest of the new debt we have incurred, would far exceed the profits which could accrue to us from these acquisitions. In short, our entering into war is always a losing game, and ought, by patriotic Ministers, to be carefully and anxiously avoided.

AMONG the many complicated evils which our frequent wars have brought upon this country, the contraction of debt is none of the least considerable: It cuts the nerves and sinews of a state, and deprives it of power and ability in all its operations both foreign and domestic, and must be severely felt by a trading state, when it is allowed to increase to a certain extent, or to amount to such an exorbitant sum as this country, by the infamous conduct of Ministers, is now obliged to struggle with. It must weaken and debilitate the very foundations; and, I may say, in the end destroy them, on which the success of every commercial branch depends. When we reflect on the situation and circumstances of this country at the time of its engaging in the present unjust and unnecessary war, we may venture to affirm, without impinging upon truth, or violating any principle of justice, that no Ministers, from the time

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of the Revolution, have done so much real detriment and hurt to their country as the present men have done.

BRITAIN at present must have been the greatest and most flourishing country that ever had existence, had we been entirely free of debt; had we cultivated commerce and improved manufactures, without involving ourselves in ruinous wars; had all the money that has been expended in Germany, and given away to satisfy the exorbitant and rapacious demands of our foreign subsidies, and the whole profits of our commerce been saved to the country. In the present state of mankind, perhaps such a high strain of virtue in our Ministers was not to be looked for: It may be unreasonable to form such expectations; but even depraved as mankind are, we were certainly intitled to have expected a different conduct from our Ministers in the administration than they have held.

THE government of Charles II. and of his brother James VII. was perhaps the worst government that ever was established in any country.— The people were then oppressed and maltreated in the most cruel manner; but they had the prospect

pect of its coming to a period, by the death or removal of these Monarchs. But the burdening the country with such a load of debt as we labour under at present, admits of no remedy. It not only distresses the people who live in the present time, but entails a permanent evil on their posterity. The interest amounts to such a prodigious sum, that the payment of it alone must afflict the country very severely, nor can the people every entertain the smallest hope of being able to pay or clear off the capital, which demonstrates the necessity of establishing some proper reform of œconomy in the management of the public finances. The Gentlemen who have had any accession in bringing the country into such a situation, or who have co-operated in any degree in promoting measures so pernicious, should feel very disagreeable reflections, if they are still capable of any virtuous sentiments. We are so formed by nature, that all our passions increase by indulgence, and diminish by restraint; this enables us to cultivate our virtuous passions, and to acquire by habit the method of acting in an upright and virtuous manner. Those who pursue a contrary method, by cultivating vicious habits, will find it extremely difficult to overcome or shake off the habits to which they have been long in-

ured. I am affraid our Ministers are in this unhappy situation : they have been so long accustomed to postpone the public interest to their own private and selfish views, that they will find it difficult to return to habits of virtue and honesty.

EVERY person who considers this subject deliberately, must certainly conclude, that private interest is the dominant and governing principle in most minds. When they see the public interest generally sacrificed to private views, it is natural to make this inference. Patriotism and the love of one's country, are words which are often employed by the most corrupt Ministers; but it is impossible to interpret their conduct as proceeding from these noble and honourable motives, when the consequences which flow from their actions are so diametrically opposite to its real interests. This argument is strongly corroborated, when we reflect upon the shameful profusion with which public money has been squandered away during this war. There is, perhaps, no virtue more necessary in the Ministers, or whose beneficial influences are more universally felt, than œconomy in the management of the public money. It is hard upon a country, in the circumstances that Britain is at present, to have its public funds dissipated with so lavish a hand,

hand, not only in bribery and corruption, but in supporting schemes by which the country is hurt, in place of being applied to the extension of commerce and the advancement of manufactures, from which results our national opulence. The King of Prussia has received and pocketed a considerable sum, and considerable sums has been given to the Emperor, from which no benefit can accrue to this country. Where a war is defensive in the proper sense, the war is necessary, and the money expended in this manner, is laid out for the benefit of the country ; but few of the wars in which Great Britain has been involved since the Revolution, deserve this name ; they cannot be considered in so favourable a light.

UNFORTUNATELY for this country, few of our Ministers have had a just and proper sense of the necessity of œconomy in the management of the public finances. This virtue is seldom conspicuous in men of ability. Before arriving at high stations, they have generally mismanaged their affairs in private life, and by thoughtless boundless profusion, reduced themselves to indigent circumstances ; and they introduce into the management of public affairs, the same improper maxims of conduct. They look down with contempt upon
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the virtue of oeconomy, as much beneath their consideration, and unbecoming great abilities. How much this country has suffered from men of the above description and character, must be confessed by every candid and ingenuous person. It is, no doubt, proper and indeed necessary, that the men who are raised to the helm, should have great talents in parliamentary debates, and should be possessed of extensive reach and depth of understanding in the management of parties. It is these talents and rhetorical abilities which bring men into public view, and elevates them to the first direction in every country. By them they are enabled to lead and direct in public assemblies, and without these abilities would be unfit to preside. If to these exalted talents, they should happen to unite the virtues of oeconomy and patriotism, they become no doubt public blessings; but, unhappily for mankind, this is seldom the case. It is mortifying to human nature, but it is generally found to be the truth, that probity and worth are not often joined to these extensive abilities.—There is a strength of mind required to enable men to resist the temptations with which these high stations are surrounded, which falls to the lot of few.—The immense sums of money which have been wantonly expended in carrying on the
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war in which we have been engaged by our Ministers, with a view to preserve themselves in power, when we consider the circumstances of the country, furnishes indisputable evidence of their want of œconomy, and calls aloud for some speedy remedy.

BUT, to return from this digression, if it can properly be called one, let us consider a little the revolution which has lately happened in France, and which is the pretext for involving us in the present war. This revolution, if all its circumstances are maturely considered, has nothing to equal it either in ancient or modern times. The people in France, since the time of Louis XIV. have been distinguished in a very eminent degree for their loyalty and attachment to their Sovereigns; yet these people, to the astonishment of all Europe, have overturned their Monarchical Government, and established a Republic in its room; and, notwithstanding what our Ministers would make us believe, the unanimity with which this was done, was truly amazing. Not only the people but the whole army joined in it; though, in France, the army and people seemed to be formerly united in their sentiments, that to promote the grandeur and glory of the French Monarch,

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was to advance the real interest and the welfare of France. They seemed to consider the true interest of the country to consist in nothing but this. Whatever retainers to Ministry may assert to the contrary, this alteration of sentiment was very general and universal. It was impossible that it could be perfectly unanimous in so great and populous a country. If a Court of Justice or Public Assembly are seldom unanimous in the determination of cases that come before them, how can it be expected that twenty millions of people should be unanimous in such an affair as this?— But I may venture to affirm, that when the revolution happened in Britain, there were more people averse to that salutary and necessary measure in this country, than what there were in France, if we make the proper allowance arising from the extent of the country, and the number of people there.

To every person who thinks justly, and will allow himself to deliberate impartially upon this revolution, it will appear perfectly unaccountable what could induce our Ministers to enter into a war with France. It does not appear that the French had the least intention of encroaching on any of their neighbours, or extending their dominions

minions by conquest, at the time it happened.— If they had not been attacked by the Emperor and the King of Prussia, the boundaries of France would have remained the same now that they were at that time, and, in all probability, their government would have been perfectly settled and established. It was the invasion which the Emperor and the King of Prussia made upon them, that has produced the consequences which have since followed. They at first proceeded with a rapid progress, and made a considerable impression on the frontiers of France, but at length were obliged to retreat with great precipitation. The conduct of the Emperor and the King of Prussia, in making this attack upon France, cannot be matter of surprise to any thinking person. They were absolute Monarchs, and on that account were concerned as such to prevent any revolution in Europe, which might afford an example to their own subjects to throw off their allegiance. Their subjects were precisely in the same situation with the French people, in being subject to the absolute dominion of their Princes.

THIS accounts in the most satisfactory manner for their conduct, but can never furnish any reason to justify our proceedings. If the matter is

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viewed in a just light, it cannot be alledged, as a reason to vindicate our Ministers and their conduct, that the French first declared war against us. They proceeded, perhaps, with too much haste and precipitancy in their denunciation of war, but what induced them to take this step is very evident. They perceived clearly that we were determined to commence hostilities against them, and to join with the Emperor and the King of Prussia in compelling them to submit again to the arbitrary power of Monarchs; a state and condition to which the spirit of the nation could never be brought to agree. As this is the true state of the fact, it was not the French, though they first declared war, that ought to be accounted the aggressors, but ourselves, who were resolved to afford our assistance to the two Monarchs, who had thus unjustly attacked them. It was this unjust attack made upon them, that, in a great measure, occasioned the many barbarous massacres that were committed in France at this time. Though these actions can never be justified, yet we ought to remember, that the Covenanters, to whom we in this country owe our liberties, at least equalled, if they did not exceed, the French in every act of barbarity and cruelty, and in every species of oppression.

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It may, I believe, be justly observed, that all parties, whether in civil or religious disputes, when they prevail, are equally intolerant, and incapable of admitting or extending indulgence to those who differ from them in sentiment. Want of moderation in all contests seems to be a distinguishing feature and characteristic in human nature. But the French at this time certainly thought, there was no other method so effectual to suppress and extinguish the party that still adhered to, and was bent upon restoring the Royal Family, as terror and dread of punishment; and they were no doubt exasperated and rendered worse by the unjust opposition which was made to their new establishment. When we joined ourselves to the Emperor and the King of Prussia, in order to re-establish despotism in France, the confederacy must have appeared formidable, and might justly raise doubts with regard to the event. The party in France who were inclined to favour the Royal Family, might have afforded considerable assistance to the combined Powers, which would dispose, no doubt, the prevailing party there to employ severe punishments, in order to intimidate and deter them, which renders a great part of the blame of the many murders which were perpetrated at this time justly imputable to the

Powers that were inimical to France, and their opposition has certainly retarded the establishment of their government. The confusions and troubles that must necessarily arise in so great and populous a kingdom, upon so sudden and unexpected a revolution, rendered it perfectly impossible that every thing could be immediately settled, though they had met with no opposition in their proceedings, but would certainly have come sooner to a period, if no obstacles had been thrown in their way by neighbouring Powers.

It was certainly in the power of our Ministers to have preserved the peace of Europe at this time, by doing which, they would have prevented the great effusion of blood which the war has occasioned, and likewise have saved to this country the immense wealth that has been uselessly squandered away. The Emperor and King of Prussia must have desisted from hostilities, had we refused our assistance in carrying on the war.— As the strength of the combined Powers was justly to be dreaded, France would have listened to any reasonable terms that had been proposed by Great Britain. The excuse that has been insisted upon by our Ministers in their own vindication is absurd and ridiculous. They have said,
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that the dominant power in France at that time could not be treated with, nor any reliance be had in any conventions we might conclude with them. Have they forgot the history of their own country? When Cromwell cut off the head of Charles I. and usurped the supreme power in this island, no European Power at that time thought it incumbent on them to make war on this country, or to refuse to enter into treaty with Cromwell, though no person could entertain any belief that his government would be of long duration. From this it must appear an unavoidable conclusion, that all the mischief and calamity which this war has been productive of, must be ascribed to our Ministers.

I OBSERVED before, that this universal alteration of sentiment in the French people, who were so eminently distinguished for their loyal attachment to their Sovereigns, could not fail to surprise and astonish the different countries of Europe. But, upon mature deliberation, it will appear obvious, that this sudden change of sentiment was produced entirely by the aid and assistance which the French Monarch afforded to the Americans in the late war with Great Britain. To every thinking Frenchman, it must have appeared

peared most absurd and inconsistent, that an absolute Monarch should employ his subjects to establish liberty and freedom in another country, and that they should be obliged to expose their lives in favour of the liberty of others, while they themselves were living in the most abject submission and slavery. It must likewise have appeared unaccountable to them, that the only pretext which their Sovereign could alledge to justify this extraordinary proceeding was a zeal for liberty, and an abhorrence at seeing others oppressed and ill-used. This conduct in the French Monarch could not fail, upon being attended to, to excite indignation in the minds of a spirited nation. It could not be imagined that this zeal for the happiness of others could be genuine and sincere, when his own subjects were deprived of this very blessing, which they were shedding their blood to secure to others. To all this may be added, the consideration, that the French Monarch, by acting in this manner, was guilty of the basest perfidy and breach of faith to Great Britain. He certainly could have no good ground to justify him, in joining at that time in a rebellion happening in any part of the British dominions. He was then in peace with this country, and had not the smallest reason to complain of their conduct,

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nor could with any justice say, that they had been guilty of any infraction or violation of treaty then subsisting between the two countries. What aggravates considerably this matter, and renders the French Monarch more culpable, is the obvious falsehood of alledging, that any part of the British dominions had just grounds to complain of oppression. Whatever errors might be committed by the British Legislature in administering the government in America, and which were the causes of the unfortunate war which afterwards ensued, it can never be pretended, with any colour of justice, that the Legislature intended to infringe the liberties of America. In the best Administrations that ever existed, errors in government are unavoidable, arising from the imperfection of human nature. Every person who has studied with attention, and thoroughly examined the principles of the British Constitution, must certainly acknowledge, that no Government, either ancient or modern, was ever more judiciously framed for the enjoyment of liberty, or provided with better barriers for the security of freedom. Any pretences of this kind appear frivolous and groundless in the strongest degree.

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THE true reason of the conduct of the French Monarch could be no other but a desire to seize the opportunity which this war afforded him of distressing Great Britain. All this could not fail to strike most forcibly every Frenchman who bestowed a thought on the subject, and incline him to throw off the yoke of absolute monarchy.

THE Royal Family of France has suffered most justly, for their gross perfidy and notorious breach of faith, and had certainly no just grounds to expect the countenance or assistance of Great Britain to enable them to recover their crown.—Here the contrast betwixt Great Britain and France must appear forcibly striking. The French, when assisting the Americans, pretended to engage on the side of liberty, though themselves subject to arbitrary rule. They undertook to fight in order to establish the liberty of the Americans.—Great Britain again, though living under the happiest constitution of government, where the liberty of the subject is better secured than under any government either in ancient or modern times, has engaged on the opposite side, in order to oblige twenty millions of people to submit themselves to despotism and arbitrary rule. This unaccountable conduct in a free nation

nation will certainly disgrace the annals of that reign in which it happened. I know no conduct similar to it, except that of Francis I. who persecuted the Protestants in his own dominions, when he was encouraging and assisting them against the Emperor Charles, at the time they were contending for a reformation in religion.

ONE would imagine the motives must have been very strong which could induce our Ministers to act such an inconsistent and contradictory part. I am afraid, however, it will be found impossible to discover any good and virtuous motive, upon reflecting on their conduct. The reason formerly hinted at appears to be the most obvious. All the Monarchs in Europe must have looked upon the overturning of Monarchical Government as a dangerous example; they must on that account have inclined to oppose it with all their might, wherever it happened. If the present Ministers had refused to comply, the Sovereign would have found others, who would have agreed to the measure in order to get into power. The love of power and rule is so universally desired by mankind, that it seems to extinguish in the breasts of most men every sentiment of honour and patriotism. They have, therefore, sacrificed the public in-

terest without scruple, in order to keep themselves in power. It is impossible to avoid putting this construction on their actions. The character they have justly acquired for ability and understanding, excludes all suspicion of their having mistaken the true interest of the country, or of their not perceiving the consequences to the country, from their entering into this ruinous war.

IT has been alledged, and maintained with great confidence, that our liberties were in danger, and that the war on that account became necessary. How this could be the case is perfectly inexplicable. Our liberty is certainly in much greater danger by the absolute Monarchy being restored in France, than if a Commonwealth should be established there.—In evidence of this assertion, I must be allowed to take a short retrospect of the Monarchy of France, from the time it became absolute.

UPON the death of Henry IV. who is justly esteemed to have been the greatest Prince of his age, whether we consider his political or military abilities, his son Louis XIII. succeeded. His Minister Richlieu, who was a man of a most extensive genius, formed the plan of rendering the King
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absolute, which was pursued by his successors Mazarine and Colbert. This scheme these Ministers at last perfectly accomplished. Louis XIV. was in the strictest sense as absolute as any Prince in Europe. From this time France has been justly dreaded by all her neighbours; the peace and tranquillity of Europe has been constantly disturbed by the ambition and unjust views of her Monarchs. From this time the desire of universal empire has been the ruling passion of all her Princes, and has been uniformly pursued by them, without regard to the faith of treaties, or any moral rule whatever. It was certainly impossible for Europe, in the neighbourhood of so great a power, which was actuated by such unjust views, to enjoy for any length of time, that peace and tranquillity, which is and must be desired and wished for by every well governed state. When France had exhausted her strength, in endeavouring to accomplish her unjust and ambitious views, Europe enjoyed some short interval of tranquillity, till she had again recruited her strength, and then was exposed to the same danger. But this evil proceeded entirely from her form of government. There cannot be a more certain truth, than that the terror entertained of France by all Europe, is to be attributed to the form of arbitrary govern-

ment introduced and established by the Ministers before mentioned. Every person who is in the least acquainted with the history of Europe for above a century, must subscribe to the truth of this conclusion. These unjust proceedings ought by no means to be imputed to the French nation, who are as peaceably inclined, and as little disposed to injure their neighbours, or disturb their peace and tranquillity, as any other European country.

UPON abolition, therefore, of the Monarchy, and another government being established in its place, the neighbouring states may come to be delivered from their apprehensions of her power—they may have just reason to hope, that this plan of policy will be abandoned, and that juster views of the true interest of France may prevail. The situation of France, which lies upon the Atlantic Ocean, cannot fail to point out what her real interest is; but the great advantages arising from it have been in a great measure lost, from her Princes being perpetually engaged in unjust wars to extend her dominions. When we reflect upon this situation of France, and the number of people it contains, it must appear evident, that she can have no reason to dread any of her neighbours, and consequently can have no interest in disturb-
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ing their tranquillity. Her true interest seems to be the same in every respect with ours ; I mean to consult the general good and real benefit of the people, by cultivating the arts of peace, by an industrious application to the improvement of manufactures, and by assiduous exertions to encourage and promote foreign trade. This method of conduct could not fail to render all the great towns, with which the different provinces of France abound, both populous and rich. Every person who is acquainted with the history of France, knows, that from the beginning of the reign of Louis XIV. plans of conduct, directly opposite to these wise measures, have been steadily and invariably pursued. But when the government of France is once settled in the form of a Republic, it is probable that her true interest will be perceived, and will prevail, and will be the rule of proceeding adopted by her rulers. Commonwealths, especially trading ones, are seldom inclinable to enter into war. From all which it seems to be no far-fetched inference, that the change of government in France may turn out to the real benefit and advantage of Europe. Our Ministers, from their great wisdom, wanted to re-establish the former government, in place of labouring to preserve peace, which the interest of this country unquestionably

tionably required. If the former government was restored in France, there would be no prospect that she would ever change her measures, or relinquish her former ambitious views. The grandeur of the crown was the ultimate object which the policy of the French Ministers seemed to aim at, and which they considered as the glory and interest of France. In place, therefore, of opposing this change of her government, it would appear to be the interest of Europe to promote it, since her situation may be rendered better, and her peace and tranquillity become much more secure by it. An absolute tyrannical government is not, perhaps, a greater misfortune to the people who live under it, than it is to all the states that surround them. Our Ministers have certainly incurred a great degree of guilt, by endeavouring the restitution of the absolute government in France. It was no less than professing an intention of keeping Europe in perpetual alarm, and in constant danger of losing her liberty by an ambitious neighbouring power. In order to facilitate the execution of this criminal design, they have endeavoured, on this memorable revolution, to propagate unjust views and representations of the French nation and their rulers. This conduct deserves the severest censure and animadversion, and can admit of

of no apology. By every candid and impartial person, the French must be allowed to be the most distinguished nation in Europe, both in respect of arts and arms; and, by their conduct at present, have discovered a reach of understanding and penetration, of which no example can be found in any former period. The spirit and unanimity with which they have overturned their absolute Monarchy, merits admiration; and, notwithstanding the great clamour that is endeavoured to be raised against their proceedings at this time, this period of their history will be viewed and regarded by future ages, who certainly will be more just and equitable in their judgments, with the applause and admiration it deserves. They have most certainly indicated a much superior understanding with regard to true philosophy, and much more liberal views in every respect than ever appeared in the history of any country. Their just contempt of the illiberal prejudices, and narrow confined sentiments on many important subjects entertained by other nations, must gain them in future times, their merited applause and esteem.

It can afford no reason to justify the conduct of Ministers in entering into this war, that the French, by their proceedings after the revolution, seemed

seemed to disregard all law, and to trample upon every thing most valuable in society. Such an unexpected revolution could scarce happen or be brought to a period, in so great and populous a country as France, without some degree of anarchy, confusion, and disorder, and a great many cruel and illegal actions being committed. But what is all this to the purpose? The confusions there might have operated greatly to the advantage of this country, by securing to us the prospect of peace for some time, the enjoyment of which we could never rely upon while the Monarchy subsisted. It must have taken a considerable time before their new government could be settled in any regular form, and the respite furnished us by their dissensions, should have been employed in promoting the sources of our national wealth and power. To men of perfect and inflexible integrity, who can entertain no conception that any man can be so unprincipled and profligate as to bring the greatest misery and distress upon so great and flourishing a nation, merely to advance their own private views, such abandoned conduct must appear deserving of the last degree of punishment. It has been said, that the French wanted to sweep away all Monarchical government. It is certainly true, that they wanted to overturn

return absolute Monarchy in France, and likewise declared their detestation of it wherever it was established; but in this respect their sentiments were just, and friendly to the happiness of mankind. Our Ministers, on the other hand, wanted to re-establish absolute Monarchy there, and to subject twenty millions to servitude, by which they shewed themselves to be enemies to the happiness of mankind; and having discovered such arbitrary principles, ought to be considered as improper Ministers in a country, the constitution of which is founded upon principles of liberty.

THE right of the people to petition Parliament was even denied by one Gentleman in the House of Commons. It was said by him, that this privilege ought to be confined to legal assemblies; that is, to meetings called by an officer or magistrate who is constituted by the Crown, where Ministerial influence is likely to prevail. It cannot be supposed that officers will ever summon a meeting unless they think themselves able to dictate its resolutions, and to lead by their influence all its deliberations. This is new and uncommon doctrine indeed. Every person who understands the principles of the British Constitution must as-

fert it to be the privilege of the lowest class of people to petition Parliament. They have rights and privileges belonging to them, as well as men of the greatest rank have, and if they think that their immunities are infringed, or their privileges are violated in any manner, they are surely entitled to seek redress by petition.

It cannot be urged in this case, as an argument in favour of the war, that it was in order to prevent the danger of the French republican principles spreading among the people of this island.— We must guard against this danger in the best manner we can ; not by making war, but preserving peace. If the present established government was exposed to any danger from the machinations of the Friends of the People, they certainly would have been much more easily suppressed if we had remained in peace. Entering into war had a tendency to propagate these principles. The success which the French have had in the war might encourage them to expect aid and assistance from them, which hopes would have been defeated by continuing in peace. They have been kept under during the war with no great difficulty, and certainly this might have been effected with greater facility during peace.

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THE first institution of the Society of the Friends of the People was really intended to promote the most salutary and beneficial plans to the country and Government; but the patriotic instituters of this society did not attend to the bad consequences that might result from the name which they had assumed to themselves. Their styling themselves *Friends of the People* infused a notion into the minds of the vulgar, that they were oppressed by Government, and that they laboured under the real grievance of want of liberty, than which nothing can be more destitute of foundation in truth. The erecting a cap of liberty in this country could proceed only from this groundless notion. In this error are founded the absurd tenets and principles, and unreasonable views of some of these people, which are by no means calculated to gain profelytes to their opinions.— They have rather a tendency to bring those who profess them into contempt. It is absurd in the highest degree to pretend, that we want liberty under the present establishment. Under no government which ever existed more liberty ever was or could be enjoyed. It has been the subject of admiration to every judicious and well-informed foreigner. No person of sound understanding would ever consent to overturn such a

government. At the same time, as no human institution was ever perfect, every good patriot would be inclined to correct any defect that may appear in it, or to remove any encroachments that have been made upon its original principles. It is impossible, I believe, to make any constitution of government answer exactly its original design, however well framed it may be; but this impossibility proceeds from the imperfection of human nature. If you could find men of strict probity and virtuous principles to administer it, our happiness behoved to be much greater.

HOWEVER much our civil constitution deserves to be admired, when its principles are thoroughly understood, yet the body of mankind not being capable of deep researches, generally judge by their feelings, and if they live happy under a government, become sincere friends to it. A war so diametrically opposite to the true interests of the country, and the distress this has occasioned, has irritated the minds of the people to a great degree, and incensed them against the present administration. This has increased the number of the Friends of the People, and evidently has a tendency to rivet in their minds the erroneous notions which they had imbibed concerning our Constitution.

stitution. Their passions have been raised, and their minds exasperated to an uncommon degree by an unfortunate war. The bad success of the war has been lately denied by a Gentleman in the House of Commons. It was even contended by him, that no war we ever were engaged in was distinguished by greater successes than the present. This was a very bold assertion for any man to make in such an assembly. It was no great compliment to the understandings of his audience.— He certainly might have affirmed with equal confidence the truth of any proposition. The want of success has been, I believe, greatly owing to their exertions having been improperly directed, I mean in expeditions to the Continent. Had the sums which have been carried to Germany and elsewhere been expended in equipping armaments by sea, and employed in naval operations, they might perhaps have brought some advantage to the country, though in no degree equal to, or that could in any measure compensate for the loss and damage that the war has occasioned. Our wars upon the Continent have been seldom or ever undertaken upon true British principles, but generally in prosecution of measures, which are totally foreign to the interests of this country.

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No person who is not blindly attached to Ministry but must confess, that the grossest errors have been committed in the management of the present war ; not only plans have been conceived, and attempted to be carried into execution, which were really impracticable, but want of foresight has appeared in many of their expeditions. Notwithstanding our boasted superiority at sea, and the inferiority of the French in this particular, they have done much more damage and mischief to our trade than' they could have done had our naval operations been properly conducted. The French, it may be said, have had more trade during this war than they could have had at present, had they been in peace with us, if we consider the considerable share they have had of our trade, by the numerous captures they have made. Whatever our Ministers may think, the war has been conducted by them with much greater ability.— They have without question discovered very great abilities both in the cabinet and in the field.— Some of their speeches which have appeared in print contain true principles of liberty, and are replete with the most patriotic sentiments, which would have been heard with applause and approbation in the public assemblies of Greece and Rome,

Rome, in their most polite, elegant, and philosophical ages.

FROM the bad success of the war hitherto, and the calamity it has brought on the country, it cannot be wondered at, that the people of this island have discovered some discontent with, and aversion to the present measures of Administration; and their sentiments, whatever Ministers may think, ought to be attended to, as a consideration of some moment. It is an observation made by an eminent writer, that the body of a people have juster views of the public interest, and pursue them with greater uprightness than the nobility and gentry, who are often turned aside from the right path by hopes and expectations, while the common people can have no view or wish but to promote the general good.

LET us now, before we come to a conclusion, enumerate with brevity the great advantages that must have accrued to Europe, and to this country, had we remained in peace. We certainly could have suffered no prejudice in any respect. The doing of this will enable us to form a just estimate of the merit or demerit of our Ministers, in engaging us in the present war.—

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Upon this supposition France must have been confined within her ancient limits ; Holland would have remained in the same condition she was in before the commencement of hostilities ; the Emperor would have been in the possession of all his dominions both in Germany and in Italy, and whatever may yet be conquered from him before the conclusion of the war. With regard to Great Britain, she would have been saved not only from the great addition of debt she has incurred by the war, but part of our former burdens might have been discharged, which must have afforded some relief to the country ; to which must be added, our security from the calamities we have suffered from the war by an interrupted commerce, occasioned not only by the numerous captures that have been made of our ships, but what likewise arises from the odious and detestable practice of impressing seamen, (which necessity only can justify,) by which the merchant ships are deprived of their sailors, which amounts in a certain degree to a suspension of trade. To all this let us join a consideration, which, with people who are endowed with humanity and benevolence to the human species, must have considerable influence ; the great effusion of human blood must have been prevented, and those dreadful devastations in the countries

tries that have been the scenes of the warlike operations, with the concomitant misery and distress of the poor inhabitants. When we consider all these accumulated evils arising from the war, can we hesitate a moment to declare the war to have been unnecessary?

To conclude this argument, no war can in justice be accounted necessary, where the essential interests of the country are not advanced in some measure by it. The essential interests I reckon to consist in improvements of agriculture, in extending our commerce, in improving manufactures, and in lessening the national debt. This last is a consideration of very great importance to a commercial country. If these different interests, in place of being promoted, are materially hurt by our entering into the present war, and if it appear that no national benefit whatever could arise from it, it ought to have been anxiously avoided as unnecessary and improper. That the prosperity and happiness of Britain depends on the interests above mentioned, can admit of not dispute. It can as little be disputed, that these interests can never be promoted so essentially as in the time of peace, particularly the national debt can only then admit of being diminished, the importance and necessity

of which has been too little attended to by all our Ministers. Upon these considerations the continuing the country in peace was certainly necessary; but war, as prejudicial to our interests, to be necessarily avoided, which was unquestionably in the power of our Ministers. To all this may be added, that the change of government in France may, and probably will turn out, to the benefit of Europe. The great prospect of security and tranquillity, which, to every man of reflection, must appear to result from it to the other countries of Europe, by being delivered from the dread and terror arising from the ambition and unjust views of the French Monarchs, must render the war impolitical.

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Journal A

THE
JUSTICE AND NECESSITY
OF THE
PRESENT WAR WITH FRANCE,
FAIRLY AND IMPARTIALLY CONSIDERED.

JANUARY—M.DCC.XCVI.

By
Robert Craig esq. advocate.

A Present

From the Author.

THE
JUSTICE AND NECESSITY
OF THE
WAR WITH FRANCE,
CONSIDERED.

THE justice and necessity of the war, in which Great Britain is at present engaged with France, has been greatly disputed. Many men of extensive knowledge, who are endowed with strong intellectual abilities, have called it in question, and, with all their penetration, have not been able to discover either the justice or the necessity of it. Able and ingenious men may no doubt find out many plausible arguments to urge in support of any measure which they incline to espouse, tho' destitute of any real foundation in reason and good sense; but to men who reason with candour and impartiality, it will be found extremely difficult, on the strictest scrutiny and examination, to assign any good

and solid grounds on which to justify it, or to point out any satisfactory cause for entering into it.

THE justice and necessity of the war has been assumed as a clear proposition, by Ministers, in their public speeches in Parliament. In the printed declarations which they have emitted, it has been mentioned as an undoubted truth which could admit of no dispute. Magistrates, likewise, in their publications and advertisements, have affirmed the same thing, or rather have taken it for granted. To assert boldly and with confidence has considerable weight and influence with many people, but men of discernment and penetration are not so easily imposed upon; they require some other evidence to convince them, which has never yet been produced in this question.

It is certainly impossible to maintain the war to be just, unless it can be first established that France has no right to alter her form of government, tho' it should appear to be repugnant to, and improper to answer the end for which government is instituted, for another form, which she may think will promote the end better, without the consent and approbation of the other states

states of Europe. If our Ministers can demonstrate this point to the conviction of men of sense and ability, it will undoubtedly follow, that they are entitled to interfere and to direct the proceedings of France in this question; but Great Britain and other states, if it was their own case, would certainly dissent from this proposition, and ask any other state who should think proper to intermeddle, what right they could pretend to have, in making opposition to their framing and modelling their constitution, agreeably to their own inclinations, and in such manner as they thought would most advance the happiness and interest of their own country? If we consult the principles of natural law and of equity, France must certainly have an equal right with any other European state, to change and to frame her constitution to her own mind. She is as free and independent in this respect as Great Britain, or any other kingdom on the globe; and there does not appear to be any reason why she should be excluded from exercising this right, or why we should pretend to dictate to her with regard to the government she is to live under. When Louis XIV. on the death of James VII. thought proper to proclaim his son King of Great Britain, how did the Parliament here take it?

it? Did they not address the King upon the throne, and represent it in their address as the highest strain of insolence, and the greatest insult that could be offered to the British nation, to presume to declare any person to be their King, or as having a title to be so! What, therefore, should entitle us to take up arms in order to force them to submit to monarchical government?

WHATEVER our Ministers may now pretend, it was at first their determined resolution to compel France to submit to her former government. This appeared clearly to have been their intention from the printed papers which they at first emitted, in which they declare, that the King in the first place must be restored to his throne, without making any mention of limitations to be imposed on the exercise of his power. After he was restored, it cannot be imagined that he would have consented to any restrictions; nor would the powers who are confederated with Great Britain in the war have ever agreed to any such plan: they were despotic princes, who never would be brought to agree to such an example being exhibited to their own subjects.

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CHANGES and revolutions of government have sometimes happened in other countries.—Denmark above a century ago altered her form of government; Sweden has undergone several changes of government, from absolute to limited, and from limited to absolute, without the interposition of any other state. Indeed no nation in Europe then thought or imagined that they had any right or title to oppose them in so doing. How the French should be debarred from exercising the same natural liberty and power, or what should give the other states of Europe a right of opposition in their case, which is not competent in respect to other states or nations, is not very obvious. Even though we should suppose that some inconveniencies were likely to arise to other nations, from their changing their government, still this could not justify the interposition of other states, as they certainly have a right to promote their own happiness in this respect, of which it is injustice to attempt to deprive them. A gentleman of land-property would be extremely surpris'd, if any of his neighbours should oppose his making inclosures, or raising buildings upon his property, because it might hurt their views, or obstruct some beautiful prospect; he would certainly reply, that he
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had a right to the full and free use of his property, tho' it might a little incommode them. In the same manner the French have a right to advance their own happiness by correcting or altering their constitution of government, tho' it should be attended with some inconveniencies to other states. But it will be shewn immediately that this appears to be so far from being the case, that the reverse is the most probable. We may conclude this branch of the argument concerning the justice of the war with observing, that the sole reason and motive of it appears clearly to arise from nothing but the dread and terror which has been produced in the minds of the other Princes of Europe, that their subjects might perhaps imitate the example. But such a motive can never justify our Ministers in joining in this war. It is adverse to every principle of reason to maintain, that the terror and apprehension of any Sovereigns lest they should lose their power, can justify Ministers in engaging a country not only in an unjust war, but in a war from which the greatest detriment and hurt must flow to the most material interests of the country.

THE propensity of Ministers on many occasions, to engage this country unnecessarily and without

without just cause in war, has appeared very strongly since the Revolution. The little benefit which Great Britain has reaped from these wars, and the evident loss and irreparable damage which the country has sustained by them, is so flagrant and incontestible, that it must astonish every person of probity and honest principles, what could induce Ministers to embark the country in connections so ruinous and destructive.— If these Gentlemen were to be asked, what real and solid advantage could be derived to a country, the prosperity of which depends on commerce and manufactures, from the many continental wars in which it has been involved since the above-mentioned period, they would certainly be very much puzzled to give an answer; I mean any answer that would convey solid satisfaction and conviction to a fair and impartial mind. On the other hand, it must appear obvious, that to a country whose flourishing state depends on trade, nothing can be more repugnant to, or more detrimental to its real interest and welfare, than the interruption of its commerce, the hurting of its manufactures, the squandering away the profits arising from its trade, and contracting an enormous load of debt, which it never can have any prospect of being able to discharge. The

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consequences that must evidently flow from this, are heavy oppressive taxes, which will continue to distress us while we remain a nation ; to which may be added, as a natural corollary, heightening the price of labour, by which foreigners must be enabled to undersel us in foreign markets.—What is this but striking at the very source of our well-being and prosperity, and sapping the very foundations of our national wealth and riches ! All this has been done, and the same measures still continue to be pursued ; nor can any remonstrances, or the strongest reasons that have been again and again urged, and repeated both in Parliament and in different publications, avail in putting a stop to a conduct, so evidently ruinous to a great and flourishing kingdom.

THE late Lord Chatham, while a member of the opposition, declaimed with the greatest strength of reasoning, and the utmost force of eloquence, in which he so eminently excelled, against our engaging in German wars, and in his speeches pointed out and demonstrated with the greatest perspicuity, the absurdity and futility of this conduct ; but no sooner was he taken into the service of government, than he immediately changed his tone, and employed the whole force
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of his eloquence and uncommon abilities, in maintaining the opposite side of the question. Is it possible for any person, however inclinable he may be to put favourable interpretations on mens actions, to justify such a versatile behaviour? It is impossible to ascribe it to change of opinion. If a Judge on any of the benches of the courts of justice was thus to abandon his principles, and sometimes to argue in one way and sometimes in another, as it tended to promote the interest of particular parties in a cause, he would incur a most detestable character, and be esteemed an unfair and unjust judge. A person who would act in this manner in any dealings and transactions in private life with his neighbours, would be regarded as void of probity, and unworthy to be relied on or trusted. Is this really the case? and shall a man who has acted in this manner, where the interests of a whole community are concerned, who has changed principles, and adopted a new mode of conduct to advance his own views of private interest at the expence of that of his country—shall this man escape censure, nay come off with eclat, while the other is reprobated and condemned universally? Certainly it ought not to be the case; the conduct of the Minister must be much more criminal, as it involves the wel-

fare of the whole community, while the other is confined to the interests of private persons.

IN the many German wars in which we have been engaged, many plausible arguments have been urged by administration to justify their conduct, but they have been demonstrated to be entirely groundless, and the futility of their reasonings has been often exposed by those in opposition. Germany is a country more populous than France, and if the Princes were to unite, would be able to bring more numerous forces into the field; they are able to defend themselves without receiving any aid or assistance from Britain, and they would do it if left to themselves. But since the Revolution, it has been the uniform conduct of Ministers to involve this country in every continental war, and to take the lead in them, by giving subsidies to these Princes for bringing their forces into the field, in order to fight for themselves, and in defence of their own possessions: What good or sound policy could require this, or how it could ever be justly esteemed to redound to the advantage of this country, is unintelligible.

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It is in truth a very melancholy reflection, and what must sincerely afflict every virtuous mind, to observe with what facility the most corrupt ministers have been able to procure a majority in Parliament to approve of their measures, and to support them in the pursuit of them, tho' evidently tending to bring distress and ruin upon their country. Some men are no doubt imposed upon, and are misled in their public conduct, who really mean well, and wish to promote the real interest of their country. But this indulgent and charitable construction cannot be put with regard to the conduct of a great many in Parliament. Their real abilities and deep penetration cannot justify us in putting so mild an interpretation on their actions; their extensive reach and depth of understanding in examining matters to the bottom, and perceiving consequences, will not suffer us to extend our humanity so far; we must therefore, however regugnant to our natural feelings, conclude these men to be actuated by selfish views, and the prospect of private interest. This severe conclusion, relating to the conduct of many persons in Parliament at the present time, must appear to every candid and impartial mind, whose intellectual talents enable them to judge strictly conformable to truth, and not in the least exaggerated.

exaggerated. I desire these men to point out any real or solid advantage that could arise to the country from entering into the present war, or to shew in what manner the country could receive any benefit from it; the distressing situation into which we have been brought by it, by the interruption that has been given to our commerce, the injury that our manufactures have received, the squandering away such an infinite mass of treasure, by which means an addition of one hundred millions has been made to the national debt, is truly alarming, and cannot fail to create the most sincere concern, and the most serious and melancholy prospects of future consequences, to every well-wisher to his country. Tho' we should suppose with these Gentlemen, that some advantage could result to the country from the prosecution of the war, they certainly cannot have the effrontery to affirm, that these advantages could be compared with, or in any degree could compensate the misery and distress which is brought upon the country by it.

It may be demonstrated, upon the clearest and most evident principles, that when France overturned her Monarchical government in order to establish a Republic, it was then the interest of
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Great Britain to avail herself of the internal confusions of France, by improving her manufactures, and extending her commerce. It was the properest opportunity she ever could have of rendering her situation in these respects better. France being entirely occupied with her internal revolution, afforded an opportunity to Great Britain to improve her circumstances, and reap the advantages of her insular situation, without any hindrance or molestation from a rival power. The confusions and disorders that were naturally consequent on her change of government, presented to all her neighbours a reasonable prospect of continuing in peace. While these disorders should prevail, she would have found sufficient employment in settling her own affairs, without meddling with us or any of her neighbours for some time. Many persons of real virtue and extensive understandings congratulated their country upon the wide prospect of commercial advantages that promised to accrue to it from the disturbances of a neighbouring state. But they have been unfortunately deceived in their expectations—other measures than they looked for have been pursued, to the great detriment of this unhappy country. Instead of embracing the favourable opportunity which these events obviously

ly presented to us, for the extension of our trade, and the diminution of the enormous debt with which we are at present burdened, we have pursued quite contrary measures, which have been attended with misery and distress to the country. How much this must afflict every person who is really endued with the virtue of patriotism, it is unnecessary to ask.

THE greatest calamity that can be brought upon any country, but particularly upon a trading one, is the contraction of debt, which, if it is allowed to encrease to a certain extent, or to amount to such an exorbitant sum, as this country by the infamous conduct of Ministers is now obliged to struggle with, must weaken and debilitate the very foundations, and I may say, in the end destroy them, on which the success of every commercial branch depends.

BRITAIN at present must have been the greatest and most flourishing country that ever had existence, had we been entirely free of debt, had we cultivated commerce and improved manufactures, without involving ourselves in ruinous wars; had all the money that has been expended in Germany, and given away to satisfy the
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exorbitant and rapacious demands of our foreign subsidiaries, and the whole profits of our commerce been saved to the country. In the present state of mankind, perhaps such a high strain of virtue in our ministers was not to be looked for; it may be unreasonable to form such expectations. But even depraved as mankind are, we were certainly entitled to have expected a different conduct from our Ministers in the administration than they have held.

THE government of Charles II. and of his brother James VII. was perhaps the worst government that ever was established in any country. The people were then oppressed and maltreated in the most cruel manner; but they had the prospect of its coming to a period, by the death or removal of these monarchs. But the burdening the country with such a load of debt as we labour under at present admits of no remedy. It not only distresses the people who live in the present time, but entails a permanent evil on their posterity. The interest amounts to such a prodigious sum, that the payment of it alone must afflict the country very severely, nor can the people ever entertain the smallest hope of being able to pay or clear off the capital. The Gentle-

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men who have had any accession in bringing the country into such a situation, or have co-operated in any degree in promoting measures so pernicious, should feel very disagreeable reflections, if they are still capable of any virtuous sentiments. We are so formed by nature as to be able to acquire habits; and happy it is for men when they cultivate habits of acting in an upright and virtuous manner. These who pursue a contrary method, will find it extremely difficult to shake off habits to which they have been long inured; and I am afraid our Ministers who have been so long accustomed to walk in crooked paths, will find it difficult to return to habits of virtue and honesty.

EVERY person who considers this subject deliberately must certainly conclude, that private interest is the dominant and governing principle in most minds. When they see the public interest generally sacrificed to private views, it is natural to make this inference. Patriotism and the love of one's country are words often employed by the most corrupt Ministers, but it is impossible to interpret their conduct as proceeding from these noble and honourable motives, when the consequences that flow from their actions are so diametrically

metrically opposite to its real interests. This argument is strongly corroborated, when we reflect upon the shameful profusion with which public money has been squandered away during this war. There is perhaps no virtue more necessary in the Ministers, or whose beneficial influences are more universally felt, than economy in the management of the public money. It is hard upon a country in the circumstances that Britain is at present, to have its public funds dissipated with so lavish a hand, not only in bribery and corruption, but in supporting schemes by which the country is hurt, in place of being applied to the extension of commerce and the advancement of manufactures, from which results our national opulence. The King of Prussia has pocketed a considerable sum, and considerable sums have been given to the Emperor, from which no benefit can accrue to this country.—Where a war is defensive in the proper sense, the war is necessary, and the money expended in this manner is laid out for the benefit of the country; but few of the wars in which Great Britain has been involved since the Revolution deserve this name—they cannot be considered in so favourable a light.

UNFORTUNATELY for this country, few of our Ministers have had a just and proper sense of the necessity of economy in the management of the public finances. This virtue is seldom conspicuous in men of ability. Before arriving at high stations, they have generally mismanaged their own affairs in private life, and by thoughtless boundless profusion reduced themselves to indigent circumstances; and they introduce into the management of public affairs the same improper maxims of conduct. They look down with contempt upon the virtue of economy, as much beneath their consideration, and unbecoming great abilities. How much this country has suffered from men of the above description and character must be confessed by every candid and ingenuous person. It is no doubt proper, and indeed necessary, that the men who are raised to the helm should have great talents in Parliamentary debates, and should be possessed of extensive reach and depth of understanding in the management of parties. It is these talents and rhetorical abilities which bring men into public view, and elevates them to the first direction in every country. By them they are enabled to lead and direct in public assemblies, and without these abilities would be unfit to preside. If to these exalted talents they

they should happen to unite the virtues of economy and of patriotism, they become no doubt public blessings; but unhappily for mankind this is seldom the case. It is mortifying to human nature, but it is generally found to be the truth, that probity and worth are not often joined to these extensive abilities. There is a strength of mind required to enable men to resist the temptations with which these high stations are surrounded, which falls to the lot of few.

THE immense sums of money which have been wantonly expended in carrying on the war, in which we have been engaged by our Ministers merely with a view to preserve themselves in power, when we consider the circumstances of the country, furnishes indisputable evidence of their want of economy, and calls aloud for some speedy remedy.

BUT to return from this digression, if it can properly be called one, let us consider a little the revolution which has lately happened in France, and which is the pretext for involving us in the present war. This revolution, if all its circumstances are maturely considered, has nothing to equal it either in ancient or modern times. The people in
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France, since the time of Louis XIV. have been distinguished in a very eminent degree for their loyalty and attachment to their Sovereigns ; yet these people, to the astonishment of all Europe, have overturned their monarchical government, and established a republic in its room ; and, notwithstanding what our Ministers would make us believe, the unanimity with which this was done was truly amazing—Not only the people but the whole army joined in it ; tho' in France the army and people seemed to be formerly united in their sentiments, that to promote the grandeur and glory of the French Monarch was to advance the real interest and the welfare of France. They seemed to consider the true interest of the country to consist in nothing but this. Whatever retainers to Ministry may assert to the contrary, this alteration of sentiment was very general and universal. It was impossible that it could be perfectly unanimous in so great and populous a country. If a court of justice or public assembly are seldom unanimous in the determination of cases that come before them, how can it be expected that twenty millions of people should be unanimous in such an affair as this ? But I may venture to affirm, that when the revolution happened in Britain, there were more people averse
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to that salutary and necessary measure in this country than what there were in France, if we make the proper allowance arising from the extent of the country and the number of people there. To ever person who thinks justly, and will allow himself to deliberate impartially upon this revolution, it will appear perfectly unaccountable, what could induce our Ministers to enter into a war with France. It does not appear that the French had the least intention of encroaching on any of their neighbours, or extending their dominions by conquest, at the time it happened.— If they had not been attacked by the Emperor and the King of Prussia, the boundaries of France would have remained the same now they were at that time; and in all probability, their government would have been perfectly settled and established. It was the invasion made upon them by the Emperor and the King of Prussia that has produced the consequences which have since followed. They at first proceeded with a rapid progress, and made a considerable impression on the frontiers of France, but at length were obliged to retreat with great precipitation. The conduct of the Emperor and the King of Prussia in making this attack upon France cannot be matter of surprise to any thinking person—they were absolute

solute Monarchs, and on that account were concerned as such to prevent any revolution in Europe, which might afford an example to their own subjects to throw off their allegiance. Their subjects were precisely in the same situation with the French people, in being subject to the absolute dominion of their Princes. This accounts in the most satisfactory manner for their conduct, but can never furnish any reason to justify our proceedings.

If the matter is viewed in a just light, it cannot be alledged as a reason to vindicate our conduct that the French first declared war against us. They were perhaps too precipitate in doing this, but what induced them to it is very evident—they perceived clearly that we were determined to commence hostilities against them, and to join with the Emperor and the King of Prussia in compelling them to submit again to the arbitrary power of Monarchs ; a state and condition to which the spirit of the nation could never be brought to agree. As this is the true state of the fact, it was not the French, tho' they first declared war, that ought to be accounted the aggressors, but ourselves, who were resolved to afford our assistance to the two Monarchs who had
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thus unjustly attacked them. It was this unjust attack made upon them that in a great measure occasioned the many barbarous massacres that were committed in France at this time. They certainly thought there was no other method so effectual to suppress and extinguish the party that still adhered to, and was bent upon restoring the Royal Family, but terror and dread of punishment ; and they were no doubt exasperated and rendered worse by the unjust opposition which was made to their new establishment. When we joined ourselves to the Emperor and the King of Prussia, in order to re-establish despotism in France, the confederacy must have appeared formidable, and might justly raise doubts with regard to the event. The party therefore in France who were inclined to favour the Royal Family might have afforded considerable assistance to the combined powers, which would no doubt dispose the prevailing party there to employ severe punishments in order to intimidate and deter them ; which throws a great part of the blame of the many murders which were perpetrated at this time upon the powers that were inimical to France, and their opposition has certainly retarded the establishment of their government. The confusions and troubles that must necessarily arise

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in so great and populous a kingdom, upon so sudden and unexpected a revolution, rendered it perfectly impossible that every thing could be immediately settled, tho' they had met with no opposition in their proceedings, but would certainly have come sooner to a period if no obstacles had been thrown in their way by neighbouring powers.

It was certainly in the power of our Ministers to have preserved the peace of Europe at this time; by doing which, they would have prevented the great effusion of blood which the war has occasioned, and likewise have saved to this country the immense wealth that has been uselessly squandered away. The Emperor and King of Prussia must have desisted from hostilities, had we refused our assistance in carrying on the war. As the strength of the combined powers was justly to be dreaded, France would have listened to any reasonable terms that had been proposed by Great Britain. The excuse which has been insisted upon by our Ministers in their own vindication is absurd and ridiculous: They have said that the dominant power in France at that time could not be treated with, nor any reliance be had in any conventions we might conclude with them.

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Have they forgot the history of their own country? When Cromwell cut off the head of Charles I. and usurped the supreme power in this island, no European power at that time thought it incumbent on them to make war on this country, or to refuse to enter into treaty with Cromwell, though no person could entertain any belief that his government would be of long duration. From this it must appear an unavoidable conclusion, that all the mischief and calamity which this war has been productive of, must be ascribed to our Ministers.

I OBSERVED before, that this universal alteration of sentiment in the French people, who were so eminently distinguished for their loyal attachment to their Sovereigns, could not fail to surprise and astonish the different countries of Europe; but, upon mature deliberation, it will appear obvious, that this sudden change of sentiment was produced entirely by the aid and assistance which the French Monarch afforded to the Americans in the late war with Great Britain.— To every thinking Frenchman it must have appeared most absurd and inconsistent, that an absolute Monarch should employ his subjects to establish liberty and freedom in another country,

and that they should be obliged to expose their lives in favour of the liberty of others, while they themselves were living in the most abject submission and slavery. It must likewise have appeared unaccountable to them, that the only pretext which their Sovereign could alledge to justify this extraordinary proceeding, was a zeal for liberty, and an abhorrence at seeing others oppressed and ill-used. This conduct in the French Monarch could not fail, upon being attended to, to excite indignation in the minds of a spirited nation. It could not be imagined that this zeal for the happiness of others could be genuine and sincere, when his own subjects were deprived of this very blessing, which they were shedding their blood to secure to others. To all this may be added the consideration, that the French Monarch, by acting in this manner, was guilty of the basest perfidy and breach of faith to Great Britain. He certainly could have no good ground to justify him, in joining at that time in a rebellion happening in any part of the British dominions. He was then at peace with this country, and had not the smallest reason to complain of their conduct, nor could with any justice say, that they had been guilty of any infraction or violation of treaty then subsisting between the two countries.—

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What aggravates considerably this matter, and renders the French Monarch more culpable, is the obvious falsehood of alledging, that any part of the British dominions had just grounds to complain of oppression. Whatever errors might be committed by the British Legislature, in administering the Government in America, and which were the causes of the unfortunate war which afterwards ensued, it can never be pretended with any colour of justice, that the Legislature intended to infringe the liberties of America. In the best administrations that ever existed, errors in Government are unavoidable, arising from the imperfection of human nature. Every person who has studied with attention, and thoroughly examined, the principles of the British Constitution, must certainly acknowledge, that no Government, either ancient or modern, was ever more judiciously framed for the enjoyment of liberty, or provided with better barriers for the security of freedom. Any pretences of this kind, therefore, appear frivolous and groundless in the strongest degree. The true reason of the conduct of the French Monarch could be no other but a desire to seize the opportunity which this war afforded him of distressing Great Britain. All this could not fail to strike most forcibly every French-

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man who bestowed a thought on the subject, and incline him to throw off the yoke of absolute Monarchy.

THE Royal Family of France has suffered most justly for their gross perfidy and notorious breach of faith, and had certainly no just grounds to expect the countenance or assistance of Great Britain, to enable them to recover their crown.— Here the contrast betwixt Great Britain and France must appear forcibly striking: The French, when assisting the Americans, pretended to engage on the side of liberty; though themselves subject to arbitrary rule, they undertook to fight, in order to establish the liberty of the Americans. Great Britain, again, though living under the happiest constitution of Government, where the liberty of the subject is better secured than under any Government, either in ancient or modern times, has engaged on the opposite side, in order to oblige twenty millions of people to submit themselves to despotism and arbitrary rule! This unaccountable conduct in a free nation will certainly disgrace the annals of that reign in which it happened. I know no conduct similar to it, except that of Francis the First, who persecuted the Protestants in his own dominions, when he

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was encouraging and assisting them against the Emperor Charles at the time they were contending for a reformation in religion.

ONE would imagine the motives must have been very strong, which could induce our Ministers to act such an inconsistent and contradictory part. I am afraid, however, it will be found impossible to discover any good and virtuous motive, upon reflecting on their conduct. The reason formerly hinted at appears to be the most obvious. All the Monarchs in Europe must have looked upon the overturning of Monarchical Government as a dangerous example; they must, on that account, have inclined to oppose it with all their might, wherever it happened. If the present Ministers had refused to comply, the Sovereign would have found others who would have agreed to the measure, in order to get into power. The love of power and rule is so universally desired by mankind, that it seems to extinguish, in the breasts of most men, every sentiment of honour and patriotism. They have therefore sacrificed the public interest without scruple, in order to keep themselves in power. It is impossible to avoid putting this construction on their actions. The character they have justly acquired, for ability and

and understanding, excludes all suspicion of their having mistaken the true interest of the country, or of their not perceiving the consequences to the country from their entering into this ruinous war.

It has been alledged, and maintained with great confidence, that our liberties were in danger, and that the war on that account became necessary. How this could be the case, is perfectly inexplicable. Our liberty is certainly in much greater danger by the absolute Monarchy being restored in France, than if a Commonwealth should be established there. In evidence of this assertion, I must be allowed to take a short retrospect of the Monarchy of France, from the time it became absolute. Upon the death of Henry IV. who is justly esteemed to have been the greatest Prince of his age, whether we consider his political or military abilities, his son Louis XIII. succeeded. His Minister Richelieu, who was a man of a most extensive genius, formed the plan of rendering the King absolute, which was pursued by his successors Mazarine and Colbert. This scheme these Ministers at last perfectly accomplished. Louis XIV. was in the strictest sense as absolute as any Prince in Europe. From this time France has been justly dreaded by all her neighbours ;

neighbours ; the peace and tranquillity of Europe has been constantly disturbed by the ambition and unjust views of her Monarchs : From this time the desire of universal empire has been the ruling passion of all her Princes, and has been uniformly pursued by them, without regard to the faith of treaties, or any moral rule whatever. It was certainly impossible for Europe, in the neighbourhood of so great a power, which was actuated by such unjust views, to enjoy for any length of time that peace and tranquillity, which is and must be desired and wished for by every well governed state. When France had exhausted her strength, in endeavouring to accomplish her unjust and ambitious views, Europe enjoyed some short interval of tranquillity, till she had again recruited her strength, and then was exposed to the same danger. But this evil proceeded entirely from her form of government. There cannot be a more certain truth, than that the terror entertained of France by all Europe is to be attributed to the form of arbitrary government, introduced and established by the Ministers before mentioned. Every person who is in the least acquainted with the history of Europe for above a century must subscribe to the truth of this conclusion. These unjust proceedings ought by no means to be imputed

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to the French nation, who are as peaceably inclined, and as little disposed to injure their neighbours, or disturb their peace and tranquillity, as any other European country. Upon abolition, therefore, of the monarchy, and another government being established in its place, the neighbouring states may come to be delivered from their apprehensions of her power; they may have just reason to hope that this plan of policy will be abandoned, and that juster views of the true interest of France may prevail. The situation of France, which lies upon the Atlantic Ocean, cannot fail to point out what her real interest is; but the great advantages arising from it have been in a great measure lost from her Princes being perpetually engaged in unjust wars to extend her dominions. When we reflect upon this situation of France, and the number of people it contains, it must appear evident, that she can have no reason to dread any of her neighbours, and consequently can have no interest in disturbing their tranquillity. Her true interest seems to be the same in every respect with ours—I mean to consult the general good and real benefit of the people, by cultivating the arts of peace, by an industrious application to the improvement of manufactures, and by assiduous exertions to encourage

courage and promote foreign trade. This method of conduct could not fail to render all the great towns, with which the different provinces of France abounds, both populous and rich.— Every person who is acquainted with the history of France knows, that from the beginning of the reign of Louis XIV. plans of conduct, directly opposite to these wise measures, have been steadily and invariably pursued; but when the government of France is once settled in the form of a Republic, it is probable that her true interest will be perceived, and will prevail, and will be the rule of proceeding adopted by her rulers. Commonwealths, especially trading ones, are seldom inclinable to enter into war. From all which it seems to be no far-fetched inference, that the change of government in France may turn out to the real benefit and advantage of Europe. Our Ministers, from their great wisdom, wanted to re-establish the former government, in place of labouring to preserve peace, which the interest of this country unquestionably required. If the former government was restored in France, there could be no prospect that she would ever change her measures, or relinquish her former ambitious views. The grandeur of the crown was the ultimate object which the policy of the French Mi-

nisters seemed to aim at, and which they considered as the glory and interest of France. In place therefore of opposing this change of her government, it would appear to be the interest of Europe to promote it, since her situation may be rendered better, and her peace and tranquillity become much more secure by it. An absolute tyrannical government is not perhaps a greater misfortune to the people who live under it than it is to all the states that surround them.

It can afford no reason to justify the conduct of Ministers in entering into this war, that the French, by their proceedings after the Revolution, seemed to disregard all law, and to trample upon every thing most valuable in society. Such an unexpected Revolution could scarce happen in so great and populous a country as France, without some degree of anarchy, confusion, and disorder, and a great many cruel and illegal actions being committed. But what is all this to the purpose. The confusions there might have operated greatly to the advantage of this country, by securing to us the prospect of peace for some time, the enjoyment of which we could never rely upon while the Monarchy subsisted. It must have taken a considerable time before their
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new government could be settled in any regular form, and the respite furnished us by their dissensions, should have been employed in promoting the sources of our national wealth and power. To men of perfect and inflexible integrity, who can entertain no conception that any man can be so unprincipled and profligate, as to bring the greatest misery and distress upon so great a nation, merely to advance their own private views, such abandoned conduct must appear deserving of the last degree of punishment.

It has been said, that the French wanted to sweep away all Monarchical government. It is certainly true that they wanted to overturn absolute Monarchy in France, and likewise declared their detestation of it wherever it was established. But in this respect their sentiments were just and friendly to the happiness of mankind. Our Ministers, on the other hand, wanted to re-establish absolute Monarchy there, and to subject twenty millions to servitude, by which they shewed themselves to be enemies to the happiness of mankind; and having discovered such arbitrary principles, ought to be considered as improper Ministers in a country, the constitution of which is founded upon principles of liberty.

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THE right of the people to petition Parliament was even denied by one Gentleman in the House of Commons. It was said by him, that this privilege ought to be confined to legal assemblies; that is, to meetings called by an officer or magistrate who is constituted by the crown, where ministerial influence is likely to prevail. It cannot be supposed, that officers will ever summon a meeting, unless they think themselves able to dictate its resolutions, and to lead by their influence all its deliberations. This is new and uncommon doctrine indeed. Every person who understands the principles of the British Constitution, must assert it to be the privilege of the lowest class of people to petition Parliament. They have rights and privileges belonging to them, as well as the men of greatest rank have; and, if they think their immunities are infringed, or their privileges are violated in any manner, they are surely intitled to seek redress by petition.

It cannot be urged in this case, as an argument in favour of the necessity of the war, that it was in order to prevent the danger of the French republican principles spreading among the people of this island. We must guard against this danger in the best manner we can, not by making war, but preserving

ving peace. If the present established Government was exposed to any danger from the machinations of the Friends of the People, they certainly would have been much more easily suppressed if we had remained in peace. Entering into war had a tendency to propagate these principles. The success which the French have had in the war might encourage them to expect aid and assistance from them; which hopes would have been defeated by continuing in peace. They have been kept under during the war with no great difficulty, and certainly this might have been effected with greater facility during peace. The absurd tenets and principles, and unreasonable views of some of these people, are by no means calculated to gain proselytes to their opinions. They have rather a tendency to bring those who profess them into contempt. It is absurd in the highest degree to pretend that we want liberty under the present establishment. Under no Government which ever existed more liberty ever was or could be enjoyed. It has been the subject of admiration to every judicious and well-informed foreigner. No person of sound understanding would ever consent to overturn such a Government. At the same time, as no human institution was ever perfect, every good patriot would be inclined to correct any defects that may appear

appear in it, or remove any encroachments that have been made upon its original principles. It is impossible, I believe, to make any constitution of government answer exactly its original design, however well framed it may be ; but this impossibility proceeds from the imperfection of human nature. If you could find men of strict probity and virtuous principles to administer it, our happiness behoved to be much greater. However much our civil Constitution deserves to be admired, when its principles are thoroughly understood, yet the body of mankind not being capable of deep researches, generally judge by their feelings ; and if they live happy under a government, become sincere friends to it. A war so diametrically opposite to the true interests of the country, and the distress this has occasioned, has irritated the minds of the people to a great degree, and incensed them against the present administration. This has increased the number of the Friends of the People, and evidently has a tendency to rivet in their minds the erroneous notions which they had imbibed concerning our Constitution. Their passions have been raised, and their minds exasperated to an uncommon degree by an unfortunate war. The bad success of the war has been lately denied by a Gentleman
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in the House of Commons. It was even contended by him, that no war we ever were engaged in was distinguished by greater successes than the present. This was a very bold assertion for any man to make in such an assembly. It was no great compliment to the understandings of his audience. He certainly might have affirmed with equal truth, that black was white! The want of success has been, I believe, greatly owing to their exertions having been improperly directed; I mean, in expeditions to the Continent. Had the sums which have been carried to Germany and elsewhere, been expended in equipping armaments by sea, and employed in naval operations, they might perhaps have brought some advantage to the country, though in no degree equal to, or that could in any measure compensate for the loss and damage which the war has occasioned to the country. No person, who is not blindly attached to Ministry, but must confess, that the grossest errors have been committed in the management of it. Not only plans have been conceived, and attempted to be carried into execution, which were really impracticable, but want of foresight has appeared in many of their expeditions. Notwithstanding our boasted superiority at sea, and the inferiority of the French in this

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particular, they have done much more damage and mischief to our trade, than they could have done, had our naval operations been properly conducted. The French, it may be said, have had more trade during this war, than they could have had at present, had they been in peace with us, if we consider the considerable share they have had of our trade by the numerous captures they have made. Indeed, the war has been conducted by them with much greater ability, whatever our Ministers may think. They have discovered very great abilities both in the cabinet and in the field. Some of their speeches which have appeared in print, breathe sentiments of liberty and patriotism that would have been received with applause in the purest and most classical ages of Athens and of Rome.

FROM the bad success of the war hitherto, and the calamity it has brought on the country, it cannot be wondered at that the people of this island have discovered some discontent with, and aversion to the present measures of administration; and their sentiments, whatever Ministers may think, ought to be attended to, as a consideration of some moment. It is an observation made by an eminent writer, that the body of a
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people have juster views of the public interest, and pursue them with greater uprightness than the Nobility and Gentry, who are often turned aside from the right path by hopes and expectations, while the common people can have no view or wish but to promote the general good.

To sum up and conclude this argument, no war can in justice be accounted necessary where the essential interests of the country are not advanced in some measure by it. The essential interests I reckon to consist in our commerce, in our manufactures, and in lessening the national debt. This last is a consideration of very great importance to a commercial country. If these three interests, in place of being promoted, are materially hurt by our entering into the present war, and if it appear that no national benefit whatever could arise from it, it ought to have been anxiously avoided as unnecessary and improper.— That the prosperity and happiness of Britain depends on these three interests can admit of no dispute. It can as little be disputed, that these interests can never be promoted so effectually as in time of peace; particularly the national debt can only then admit of being diminished, the importance and necessity of which has been too little

attended to by all our Ministers. Upon these considerations, the continuing the country in peace was certainly necessary, but was as prejudicial to our interests to be necessarily avoided, which was unquestionably in the power of our Ministers. To all this may be added, that the change of government in France may, and probably will, turn out to the benefit of Europe, which renders the war impolitical.